

For immediate release

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Mayor Coleman Announces Support for Transformation of Scioto Riverfront

Mayor Michael B. Coleman and members of City Council today joined community partners to announce the Scioto Greenways project, which would remove the Main Street Dam and begin the process of returning the river back to its natural state. Joined by Columbus Downtown Development Corporation President and CEO Guy V. Worley, Franklin County Commissioners President Paula Brooks, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Director Scott Nally and Ohio Department of Natural Resources Director James Zehringer, Mayor Coleman and Council President Andrew J. Ginther announced their support for the project to transform the Downtown riverfront. Mayor Coleman's goal is for the plan to be completed near the end of 2015

"This will be the most transformative community investments of our generation," Mayor Coleman said. "As a result of this project, this river will be leaner, cleaner and greener."

The Scioto Greenways Plan will deepen the river from its current depth of 7 or 8 feet, to 16 feet deep in some areas. The width of the river will be reduced from 520 feet to 275 feet, adding 33 acres of green space and bike trails to the Downtown riverfront. The removal of the dam will make the river less muddy and more usable, making it a suitable for fishing, kayaking and canoeing.

"I am excited by the prospects for the Scioto downtown, and with the support of our partners in the public and private sector, not only will we improve our natural environment, but the business environment as well," said Council President Ginther. "We are further connecting Columbus neighborhoods to downtown, creating new recreational opportunities and laying the groundwork for the development of the Scioto peninsula."

A feasibility study commissioned by CDDC determined this project will cost about \$36 million. Mayor Coleman announced his support for \$18 million over the next four years, including \$4 million from Public Utilities' capital funds, and \$14 million from the remainder of the city's capital improvements budget. CDDC will raise the remainder of the funds from other community sources.

"The Scioto Greenways project is a catalytic project that will change the face of our downtown and beyond," said CDDC's Worley. "We are proud to be asked by the city to take the lead on this project and look forward to creating an active and lively riverfront."

The City of Columbus and Franklin County are tasking CDDC to develop and recommend a plan for redevelopment opportunities on the west side of the river. The CDDC expects to put forth a recommendation this fall.
